

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 17829 01 OF 03 052045Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----078383 052048Z /62
R 052015Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2641
INFO DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 17829

EXDIS

DEPT FOR NEY; DOE FOR BERGOLD, SIEVERING/IA, THORNE/ET
AND DEUTCH

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG, FR
SUBJ: THE FRENCH CHEMICAL ENRICHMENT PROCESS

1. SUMMARY: ON MAY 23 THORNE AND SIEVERING MET WITH
PECQUEUR AND BUJON AND AGREED THAT A TECHNICAL LEVEL
MEETING WAS A NECESSARY NEXT STEP. ON MAY 29 NYE MET
WITH PECQUEUR AND FOCUSED ON A BILATERAL TECHNICAL
MEETING, PROBABLY WITH FREJACQUES AND DEUTCH, WHICH
WOULD INVOLVE SIGNIFICANT PREPARATION ON BOTH SIDES.
THE USG IS OBLIGED TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH SUCH A MEETING,
BUT SHOULD DO SO WITH CAUTION AS US VIEWS ON THE ECONOMIC
AND PROLIFERATION RISK FACTORS ON THE FRENCH ENRICHMENT
PROCESS WILL IN TURN BE USED BY THE FRENCH AND OTHERS
AS LIMITS FOR REPROCESSING, PHYSICAL SECURITY AND
SAFEGUARDS FEATURES THAT MAY DEVELOP IN INFCE
AND OTHER NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION NEGOTIATIONS. END
SUMMARY.

2. ON MAY 23, AT A DINNER HOSTED BY CEA ON THE
OCCASION OF THE VISIT OF DOE ASSISTANT SECRETARY THORNE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 17829 01 OF 03 052045Z

(ATTENDED BY VENDRYES, BUJON, SIEVERING, EMBASSY
SCIENCE COUNSELOR AND DOE SCIENCE REP), CEA ADMINISTRATOR
PECQUEUR FOCUSED DISCUSSION ON THE FRENCH CHEMICAL
ENRICHMENT PROCESS. HE ASKED FOR AN EARLY CLARIFICATION
OF THE US POSITION AS FRANCE WOULD LIKE TO DECIDE ON A
PILOT PLANT IN 1978 AND OTHER POTENTIAL COLLABORATORS
WERE AVAILABLE.

3. PECQUEUR NOTED THAT ABOUT ONE YEAR HAD PASSED SINCE THE INITIAL FRENCH ANNOUNCEMENT OF THIS PROCESS AND LITTLE PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE ON DEFINITELY ESTABLISHING WHETHER OR NOT THE US WILL COOPERATE IN ITS DEVELOPMENT. PECQUEUR INSISTED, AS DID GIRAUD PREVIOUSLY, THAT THE US MUST MAKE A TOKEN PAYMENT TO LEARN THE DETAILS OF THE FRENCH PROCESS -- TO LEARN THE SECRET OF THE FRENCH "TRICK". THE PAYMENT WOULD DEMONSTRATE THE EARNESTNESS OF THE US AND, ACCORDING TO CEA, WOULD BE SIMILAR TO COMMERCIAL PRACTICE IN WHICH A COMPANY PAYS FOR INFORMATION WHICH ALLOWS IT TO EVALUATE A PATENT OF ANOTHER COMPANY.

4. THORNE AND SIEVERING STATED THAT IT IS VERY DIFFICULT, IN NOT IMPOSSIBLE, FOR THE US TO MAKE PAYMENT WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT IT WOULD BE INVESTING IN, PARTICULARLY WHEN DOE TECHNICAL STAFF HAS SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT THE PRACTICAL POTENTIAL OF THE "TRICK".

5. THE FRENCH APPEARED STRONGLY CONVINCED OF THE USEFULNESS OF THEIR PROCESS AND SUGGESTED THE US PAYMENT BE CONDITIONED ON THEIR PROCESS MEETING PREDEFINED TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC CRITERIA. THE US PARTICIPANTS STATED THEY FEARED THAT IN THE END THERE MIGHT BE ROOM FOR CONSIDERABLE SUBJECTIVE INTERPRETATION, AND IT COULD

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PARIS 17829 01 OF 03 052045Z

PROVE IMPOSSIBLE TO AGREE ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH SOME OF THE CRITERIA WERE MET. CEA ALSO WELCOMED US SUGGESTIONS FOR OTHER SUITABLE POTENTIAL COUNTRIES WHICH COULD PARTICIPATE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PROCESS.

6. THE DISCUSSION WAS TERMINATED BY SIEVERING'S PROMISE TO SEND TO FRANCE BY MID-JUNE A US TEAM TO CONTINUE THE TALKS. THE MAKEUP OF THE TEAM AND ITS EXACT MISSION WERE LEFT VAGUE. THE IMPLICATION WAS THAT THERE WOULD BE ADDITIONAL TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS AND AN EFFORT TO ESTABLISH HOW THE US COULD COOPERATE IN THIS MATTER.

7. ON MAY 29 JOSEPH NYE AND SALMON MET WITH PECQUEUR, BUJON AND CLAUDE FREJACQUES TO REVIEW THE FRENCH REACTION TO THE DISCUSSIONS ON THIS SUBJECT DURING THE MAY 23 MEETING WITH THORNE AND SIEVERING. PECQUEUR EXPLAINED THAT HE WAS DISAPPOINTED AS HE HAD EXPECTED SOME PROGRESS ON THE US SIDE. NYE EXPLAINED THAT THERE WERE TWO

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 17829 02 OF 03 052049Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----078433 052054Z /62

R 052015Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2642
INFO DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 PARIS 17829

EXDIS

COMPETING VIEWS WITHIN THE USG: ONE FROM A POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE TO THE EFFECT THAT THE US COULD NOT DROP PARTICIPATION AT THIS STAGE; AND THE OTHER FROM THE TECHNICAL VIEWPOINT THAT HAD SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL AND ABOUT THE NON-PROLIFERATION CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROCESS.

8. PECQUEUR SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THE US PROBLEM. THE GOF BELIEVES ITS PROCESS HAS ORIGINALITY AND THAT THE US HAS DEMONSTRATED IT DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE FRENCH "TRICK" BY THE QUESTIONS IT ASKED CEA IN AUGUST 1977. WHILE CEA IS NOT NOW PREPARED TO DISCLOSE ITS PROCESS WITHOUT PAYMENT, PECQUEUR IS TRYING TO DEVELOP CERTAIN PARAMETERS WITH ADEQUATE DEFINITIONS AND SPECIFY A RANGE OF EXPECTED PERFORMANCE; E.G. ECONOMIC AND NON-PROLIFERATION WHICH WOULD FACILITATE FURTHER US UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROCESS AND HELP SUPPORT A US DECISION TO PARTICIPATE IN A PILOT PLANT. PECQUEUR NOTED THAT CEA WOULD REQUIRE AN AGREEMENT ON CONFIDENTIALITY PRIOR TO DISCUSSIONS ON THESE PARAMETERS.

9. THE RESULT OF THE DISCUSSION WAS THAT THE NEXT STEP WOULD BE A TECHNICAL MEETING, PROBABLY BETWEEN FREJACQUES AND DOE RESEARCH DIRECTOR DEUTCH AND A FEW
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 17829 02 OF 03 052049Z

OTHERS. PREPARATION FOR THE MEETING WOULD BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BUJON FOR CEA AND SIEVERING FOR DOE AND WOULD FOCUS ON SELECTING PARAMETERS AND PRELIMINARY PREPARATION OF DEFINITIONS; AND THE US WOULD ATTEMPT TO IDENTIFY ITS LIMITS OF INTEREST, E.G. NOT OVER 15 PERCENT MORE EXPENSIVE THAN EXISTING COMMERCIAL ENRICHMENT PROCESSES, NOT LESS THAN 3 YEARS TO REACH HIGH ENRICHMENT LEVELS.

10. COMMENT: US INTERESTS -- OUR CURRENT QUEST FOR REDUCTION OF PROLIFERATION RISKS AS WELL AS OUR RELATIONS WITH FRANCE -- ARE BEST SERVED BY HOLDING A WELL THOUGHT OUT, BILATERAL TECHNICAL MEETING; THEREAFTER THE USG SHOULD BE PREPARED TO SAY YES OR NO ON PARTICIPATION IN A FRENCH MANAGED PILOT PLANT PROGRAM. HOWEVER, IN REACHING THIS DECISION THE USG WILL HAVE TO DECIDE ON MATTERS WHICH WILL AFFECT OTHER ASPECTS OF INFCE AND US FUTURE NON-PROLIFERATION NEGOTIATIONS; THE PRINCIPAL RELATIONSHIP IS THAT OF ADDITIONAL COST VERSUS REDUCED PROLIFERATION RISK. FOR EXAMPLE, IS A 15 PERCENT MAXIMUM ADDED COST WORTH A 3-YEAR MINIMUM LEAD TIME? US VIEWS ON THIS ISSUE FOR THE FRENCH CHEMICAL ENRICHMENT PROCESS WILL BE USED IN REPROCESSING, PHYSICAL SECURITY AND SAFEGUARDS COST VERSUS REDUCED PROLIFERATION RISK DEBATES. THUS, WHILE THE US PROCEEDS TOWARD A BILATERAL TECHNICAL MEETING, THERE IS AMPLE REASON TO GO CAUTIOUSLY BUT WITH A MEASURABLE PACE.

11. THE VEHICLE FOR PREPARATIONS FOR THE MEETING SHOULD BE A LETTER BETWEEN DOE AND CEA. WE SUGGEST THAT THIS BE INFORMALLY DEVELOPED, BIT BY BIT, USING THIS EMBASSY AS THE CHANNEL FOR EXCHANGING THE INFORMATION. POSSIBLY AS AN ATTACHMENT TO THE LETTER, AN AGREEMENT ON CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PARIS 17829 02 OF 03 052049Z

CONFIDENTIALITY SHOULD BE DEVELOPED WHICH WOULD ALSO PERMIT THE US TO PROVIDE RESTRICTED DATA ON ITS MOST RECENT CHEMICAL ENRICHMENT EXPERIENCE, IF SUCH PROVED USEFUL DURING THE BILATERAL TECHNICAL MEETING. IT IS OUR VIEW THAT THE LETTER SHOULD IDENTIFY IN GENERAL

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 17829 03 OF 03 052038Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----078357 052055Z /62

R 052015Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2643

INFO DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 03 PARIS 17829

EXDIS

TERMS THE CHARACTERISTICS OF CERTAIN PARAMETERS OF
PEFRFORMANCE THE US CONSIDERS ESSENTIAL -- E.G.
ECONOMIC, PROLIFERATION RISK, LEAD TIME - - TOGETHER WITH
FACTORS TO BE INCLUDED IN THOSE PARAMETERS -- E.G. FOR
ECONOMIC, INCLUDE CAPITAL COST OF A NORMALIZED FACILITY,
COST AND TERMS OF CAPITAL, COST OF ENERGY AND LABOR--
AND USE THESE A SAME FACTORS IN DEVEPLOPING THE
PERFORMANCE OF AN EXISTING ENRICHMENT PROCESSA.

12. WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING RESULTS OF STATE-DOE
CONSULTATIONS ON THIS MATTER AS IT PROGRESSES.
HARTMAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, CHEMICALS, MEETING REPORTS, MEETINGS, NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS, NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PARIS17829
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780234-1274
Format: TEL
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780696/aaaadelk.tel
Line Count: 253
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 11833d92-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 feb 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2489582
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE FRENCH CHEMICAL ENRICHMENT PROCESS
TAGS: ENRG, FR, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/11833d92-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014